



State of North Carolina  
Office of the Governor

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**GOV. EASLEY DECLARES STATE OF EMERGENCY**  
**Warns of Flooding - Activates State Emergency Response Team for 24/7 Operation**

**RALEIGH** – Gov. Mike Easley today declared a state of emergency for North Carolina and warned citizens of the potential for flooding and landslides as rain from Tropical Depression Frances begins to drench the state. Earlier today, Easley activated the governor's emergency bilingual hotline.

"Southwestern North Carolina has already received one to two inches of rain and we have had reports of possible tornados in Mecklenburg and Columbus counties," said Easley. "Forecasters are predicting that we will see between four and six inches from Charlotte west and perhaps as much as 12 inches in some mountain areas. Rainfall of this magnitude in a two-day period will cause flooding and there is a strong chance of landslides and dam breaks in the western part of the state.

"Citizens need to take precaution during the next several days. Those who live in low-lying areas should make arrangements to stay with friends or relatives on higher ground until the storm, and the chance of flooding, passes. Even citizens who do not live in flood prone areas should make certain that they have an evacuation plan in case of an emergency. Small creeks can flood quickly and it is critical that people stay tuned to their local weather forecasts for the latest storm information."

The N.C. Department of Crime Control & Public Safety and its Division of Emergency Management have been following the progress of Frances since it formed in late August. Gov. Easley last week directed members of the 40-plus state agencies and volunteer disaster response organizations that make up the State Emergency Response Team (SERT) to be prepared to respond to Frances. Throughout the weekend, state officials have been monitoring the storm and have been working with local officials to coordinate preparedness and response efforts. The SERT will go on full activation beginning Wednesday morning at 7 a.m. to support local storm response efforts.

125 N.C. National Guard soldiers began duty this morning in western North Carolina. Guard personnel on state duty include 20 personnel with 10 high-clearance vehicles at Task Force West in Hickory; 30 personnel with 15 vehicles in Asheville; 2 helicopters, one each in Asheville and Hickory; and 10 two-man power generation teams in Stanly County.

The State Highway Patrol has 900 troopers on alert status and 12 squads on standby.